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DEPARTMENT FOR S/CT RHONDA SHORE AND NCTC

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SUBJECT: BOSNIA - 2009 COUNTRY REPORT ON TERRORISM
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¶1. Attached is Post's draft submission for the 2009 country report on terrorism. Embassy point of contact for this report is Michael Martin, martinmb@state.gov.

¶2. Despite ethnic polarization and disputes among Bosnian political leaders that hindered the functioning of state government, Bosnia and Herzegovina's law enforcement organizations cooperated with the United States on international counterterrorism issues. Bosnia remained a weak, decentralized state with poor interagency communication and competing security structures. Efforts by Republika Srpska officials to undermine state-level institutions slowed efforts to improve operational capabilities to combat terrorism and terrorist financing. These factors resulted in Bosnia being vulnerable to exploitation as a potential staging ground for terrorist operations in Europe.

The State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) is the state-level Bosnian law enforcement agency with primary responsibility for counterterrorism operations. SIPA's capacity is limited, but it improved its cooperation with the entity-level police forces in the Federation and Republika Srpska on terrorism issues. In an effort to more effectively investigate and prosecute terrorism cases, the State Prosecutor's Office transferred responsibility for these cases to the Special Department for Organized Crime, which receives technical assistance from the U.S. and other members of the international community. Politicization of the terrorism issue in Bosnia, including terrorism threat analysis, was less of a problem this year than in the past. The state-level intelligence service provided excellent cooperation, and Bosnian authorities were generally responsive to U.S. counterterrorism cooperation requests. In December 2008 Bosnia accepted three former Guantanamo detainees for resettlement.

Some former members of the mujahedin brigade, whose citizenship was revoked by the Citizenship Review Commission, have pursued appeals of these decisions that remained unresolved. In the case of Abu Hamza al-Suri (Imad al-Husayn), the appeals process has lasted more than one year. The state-level Constitutional Court returned several portions of Hamza's appeal to the State Court, and the court had not adjudicated this case as of December 2009.

In November, four individuals led by Rijad Rustempasic with alleged ties to extremists were arrested for terrorism and weapons trafficking. One of the suspects wanted in this case remains at large.

The Bosnian organization Aktivna Islamska Omladina (Active Islamic Youth, or AIO) fractured and is no longer an officially registered organization. However some former members continued to spread extremist doctrine. These former members maintained links with extremists in Western Europe and the United States.

Former AIO member Nusret Imamovic and his community in Gornja Maoca are attracting increased attention. Concerns have been raised over the extent to which he and his followers are attempting to create a community that follows Shariah law and operates outside the Bosnian legal system. Some law enforcement officials have reportedly encountered resistance while attempting to patrol or carry out investigations in the village.

Bosnia has deployed 10 officers to augment Alliance military staffs operating under NATO's International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Bosnian defense institutions are considering the deployment of approximately 100 additional soldiers to Afghanistan to provide assistance in Emergency Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and fixed site security.

However, the Bosnian government has yet to approve this deployment as of December 2009.

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